AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show# 101 and 102

BOOK ONE: WATER
CHAPTER ONE and TWO: "The Boy in the Icerberg" &
"The Avatar Returns"

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ACT ONE

[INTRODUCTION SEQUENCE: Chinese scroll brush painting. Katara narrates the Avatar legend... TO BE WRITTEN]

MAP OF THE WORLD

The gigantic EARTH KINGDOM fills most of the map. To the west lies the islands of the FIRE NATION. The WATER TRIBES make up the North and South poles. Four AIRBENDER TEMPLES are scattered in the north, south, east, and west.

The “Avatar” logo fades up. We push in on the map toward the South Pole. Mist fills the frame. Transition to...

EXT. SOUTH SEA - DUSK

(NOTE: This episode takes place during “antarctic summer” - the time of year when the sun never sets.)

SOKKA and his sister, KATARA, sit in a lone canoe, dwarfed by the massive icy landscape. Sokka leans over the side of the canoe, spear in hand, tracking a large fish below the surface. Katara sits behind him staring at the water, her arms extended and her face scrunched up in concentration. Their breath is visible in the cold air.

SOKKA
(RE: fish)
It’s not getting away from me this time.
(to Katara)
Watch and learn, Katara. This is how you catch a fish.

While he speaks, Katara “summons” the water with her arms. A small ball of water RISES FROM THE SEA. Inside the water ball swims a freaked out little fish. She’s barely able to control it.

KATARA
(excited)
Sokka... Look!

SOKKA
(focused on the fish)
Shhh... Katara, you’re gonna scare it away.
(beat)
(MORE)

SOKKA(cont'd)
Mmm, I can already smell it cookin’.

The ball of water wobbles uncontrollably in mid-air. Katara tries to direct it toward a basket between them.

KATARA
But Sokka, I caught one!

Sokka LIFTS HIS SPEAR to throw it -- the back end of his weapon pokes Katara’s fish, sending it flying out of the ball of suspended water.

KATARA (cont’d)
Hey!

The ball of water BURSTS and a couple gallons of frigid saltwater splash into the boat and all over Sokka.

SOKKA
(SURPRISED YELP)
(then)
Why is it that every time you play with magic water, I get soaked?!

KATARA
It’s not magic, it’s Waterbending and it’s...

SOKKA
Yeah, yeah, an “ancient art unique to our culture”, blah, blah, blah. Look, I’m just saying that if I had weird powers, I’d keep my “weirdness” to myself.

KATARA
You’re calling me weird? I’m not the one who makes muscles at myself every time I see my reflection in the water!

ANGLE ON: Sokka, who has pushed up his sleeve and is checking out his reflection in the water. Busted.

SUDDENLY, a floating piece of ice SMASHES into the side of the canoe. Sokka and Katara hold on tight as the tiny canoe enters an ice floe. They are jostled around in the canoe as it bangs mercilessly against the ice.

SOKKA AND KATARA
(JOSTLED SOUNDS)

Sokka tries to steer the canoe with the oar.

KATARA
Watch out! Go left! Go left!!

SMASH! The canoe slams up against a large piece of ice. Another chuck of ice starts to CRUSH the boat around from the other side. The kids make a mad dash off the boat, just as it's completely destroyed, diving onto a nearby floating sheet of ice.

KATARA (cont'd)
You call that left?!

Behind Katara's back, a giant iceberg floats into frame.

SOKKA
You don't like my steering? Well maybe you should have "Waterbended" us out of the ice!

KATARA
So it's my fault?

SOKKA
I knew I should have left you home. Leave it to a girl to screw things up!

Katara's face scrunches in frustration. Sokka's gone too far with his sexist comment. As Katara yells at her brother, her nascent Waterbending powers are unleashed -- with each one of Katara's emotional gestures, the iceberg SPLINTERS.

KATARA
You are the most sexist, immature, nut-brained, -- I'm embarrassed to be related to you! Ever since Mom died, I've been doing all the work around camp while you've been off playing soldier!

SOKKA
(noticing iceberg splintering)
Uh, Katara--

KATARA
I even wash all the clothes! Have you ever smelled your dirty socks? Let me tell you, not pleasant!

SOKKA
(worried about iceberg)
Katara, settle down!

KATARA
NO! That's it, I'm done helping you. From now on, you're ON YOUR OWN!

On the last gesture, the ICEBERG SPLITS IN TWO. Sokka is WIDE-EYED.

Katara hears the iceberg CRASH into the ocean and turns just in time to see a WAVE OF WATER approaching them. The kids each GRAB HOLD of the icy floor as the wave lifts the ice sheet high into the water and back down again.

SOKKA
Okay, you've gone from weird to freakish, Katara...

KATARA
(proudly)
You mean I did that?

SOKKA
Yup. Congratulations.

Suddenly, a BRIGHT LIGHT ILLUMINATES the water beneath them.

A large, HOLLOW CHUNK of ice floats to the surface. It appears to GLOW from within. Inside of the cavernous block, Sokka and Katara see the silhouetted form of a large, whale-like creature (APPA) and a human (AANG). The boy's EYES OPEN, glowing momentarily.

KATARA
He's alive! We have to help!

Katara GRABS the war club off Sokka's back. She hops across a few small pieces of ice, and jumps onto to the glowing iceberg. Sokka follows.

SOKKA
Katara, get back here! We don't know what that thing is!

She hits the iceberg a few times, trying to free the person inside.

KATARA
(hitting sounds)

Her final hit cracks the ice and a brightly glowing fissure spreads to the iceberg's peak. A blinding ray of white light shoots straight up into the sky, vaporizing the top half of the iceberg. It releases a force that knocks Katara and Sokka off their feet.

SOKKA/KATARA
(grunting sounds)

EXT. FAR BELOW THE OCEAN'S SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

Seaweed soaks up the light and glows a BRIGHT GREEN.

EXT. POLAR CAPS - CONTINUOUS

A pack of sleeping ZEBRA SEALS rise up and HOWL.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - FIRE NAVY SHIP - CONTINUOUS

PRINCE ZUKO watches the BEAM OF LIGHT on the horizon with intense interest, while his UNCLE sips tea and plays a solitaire tile game.

ZUKO
Finally. Uncle, do you realize what this means?

UNCLE
I won't get to finish my game?

ZUKO
It means my search...it's about to come to an end!

Uncle PLAYS another tile, and goes back to his game.

UNCLE
("HERE WE GO AGAIN" SIGH)

ZUKO
That light came from an incredibly powerful source! It has to be him!

UNCLE
Or it’s just the celestial lights! We’ve been down this road before, Prince Zuko. I don’t want you to get too excited over nothing. Please -- sit. Why don’t you enjoy a cup of calming, jasmine tea.

Zuko gets in his Uncle’s face, planting his hands on the game board, knocking off many of the tiles and nearly spilling his Uncle’s tea.

ZUKO
I don’t need any calming tea! I need to capture the Avatar!
(turning to O.S.)
Helmsman, head a course for the light!

The uncle shrugs, and goes back to sipping his tea.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - ON THE ICEBERG - CONTINUOUS

The chunk of ice is half-melted from the beam of light. It has partial ice-walls, but no ‘roof’.

Sokka (brandishing his spear) and Katara look up toward the edge. Aang climbs over the ice above them, out of the mist.

SOKKA
Stop!

Exhausted, he stumbles down and falls into Katara’s arms. He’s adorable.

Sokka pokes the resting Aang with the blunt end of his spear. Katara pushes the spear away.

KATARA
Stop it!

Aang’s eyes suddenly open and he gazes at Katara, love-struck. Katara gazes back, similarly struck by Aang, but more from wonder, than love. In a “melodramatic, the-fate-of-the-world-hangs-in-the-balance kind of way”, Aang says...

AANG
(quietly)
I need to ask you something...

KATARA
What?

AANG
Please... come closer...

Katara leans in.

KATARA
What is it?

A long, dramatic beat, as Aang stares up into her eyes. Then...

AANG
Will you go penguin sledding with me?

KATARA
(thrown off)
Uh...sure...I guess...

Aang gets up and looks around, disoriented. He looks back at the hollow ice.

AANG
What's going on here?

SOKKA
You tell us. How'd you get in the ice?
(poking him with the blunt end of the spear)
And why aren't you frozen?

AANG
(swatting the spear away, confused)
I'm not sure...

Suddenly, Aang is interrupted by a loud GRUNT. Worried, Aang rushes back into the cavernous iceberg and slides down next to Appa (a large bison creature).

AANG (cont'd)
Appa! Are you alright?

Aang raises Appa's eyelids in an effort to wake him. They PLOP back down.

AANG (cont'd)
Wake up, buddy!

He uses all his might to lift the animal's lips. Suddenly, Appa BELLOWS (like a whale's song) and stirs to life. Appa licks Aang, lifting him off the ground momentarily with his giant tongue.

AANG (cont'd)
(LAUGHING) You're okay!

Sokka approaches, holding up his spear. Katara follows. Aang pets Appa's nose.

SOKKA
What is that thing?

AANG
(naturally)
This is Appa, my flying Bison.

SOKKA
(pointing)
Right. And this Katara, my flying sister.

Suddenly, Appa BELLOWS, and SNEEZES GUNK ALL OVER SOKKA.

AANG
Look out!

SOKKA
(GROSSED OUT NOISES)

AANG
Don't worry, it'll wash out.

Sokka wipes the bison's snot off of him.

AANG (cont'd)
(to Katara)
So, do you guys live around here?

Sokka steps in front of Katara protecting her with his spear.

SOKKA
Don't answer that. Did you see that crazy bolt of light? He was probably trying to signal the Fire Navy.

Katara steps around him and moves next to Aang.

KATARA
(to Sokka)
Oh yeah, I'm sure he's a spy for the Fire Navy -- you can tell by that "evil" look in his eye.

ANGLE ON: Aang with a goofy, innocent face.

KATARA (cont'd)
(to Aang)
The paranoid one is my brother, Sokka. You never told us your name?

Aang tries to say his name, but begins to sneeze.

AANG
I'm Aa-, AAH, AAHHH-CHOOOO!

Aang sneezes, causing a huge gust of wind to blow around him. Aang's sneeze blows him several feet into the air and he floats back down. Sokka and Katara can't believe their eyes.

AANG (cont'd)
I'm Aang.

The siblings continue to stare at Aang in disbelief as he climbs onto the bison's head.

SOKKA
(awed)
You just sneezed... and flew ten feet in the air.

AANG
Really? It felt higher than that.

KATARA
You're an Airbender!

AANG
Sure am!

SOKKA
Giant light beams, flying bison, Airbenders... I think I got midnight sun madness. I'm going home to where stuff makes sense.

Sokka turns to leave, but it’s obvious that they’re stranded on the iceberg.

AANG
Well, if you guys are stuck, Appa and I can give you a lift.

KATARA
We’d love a ride, thanks!

Excited, Katara begins to climb up onto Appa. Aang enjoys holding her hand to help her up. Sokka hesitates.

SOKKA
Oh, no. I am not getting on that fluffy snot-monster.

KATARA
Are you hoping some other kind of monster will come along and give you a ride home? You know, before you freeze to death?

Relenting, Sokka SIGHS and climbs aboard the bison.

AANG
Okay. First time fliers, hold on tight!
(to Appa)
Appa, yip yip!

Standing at the edge of the ice, Appa JUMPS INTO THE AIR TO TAKE OFF, hovers for a split second, then immediately SPLASHES DOWN INTO THE WATER LIKE A BARGE.

AANG (cont’d)
Come on Appa, ‘yip-yip.’

SOKKA
(deadpan)
Wow. That was truly amazing.

AANG
Appa’s just tired. A little rest and he’ll be soaring through the sky. You’ll see.

Appa starts PADDLING slowly through the water. Aang turns and leans back against Appa’s head, a goofy smile directed at Katara.

KATARA
Why are you smiling at me like that?

AANG
Oh, I was smiling?

Katara smiles at him warmly. Sokka rolls his eyes.

SOKKA
Blech.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - FIRE NAVY SHIP - LATER

ANGLE ON: The ship's hull as it smashes through an ice floe. Zuko stands on the bow of the ship, staring straight ahead. Uncle walks up behind him, dressed in PAJAMAS.

UNCLE
(hinting)
I'm going to bed now. (STAGE YAWN) Yup, a man needs his rest.

Zuko doesn't even glance Uncle's way.

UNCLE (cont'd)
Prince Zuko, you need some sleep.

Zuko ignores him.

UNCLE (cont'd)
Even if you're right, and the Avatar is alive -- you won't find him. Your father, grandfather, and great-grandfather all tried and failed.

ZUKO
Because their honor didn't hinge on the Avatar's capture. Mine does. This coward's hundred years in hiding are over.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - ON APPA

As Appa swims along, everyone is settled in cozily. Sokka is kicks back in the back of the saddle. Katara leans over the front.

KATARA
Hey.

AANG
Hey, watcha thinking about?

KATARA
I guess I was wondering -- your being an Airbender and all -- if you had any idea what happened to the Avatar?

Aang is struck by this question.

AANG
Uh... no, I didn't know him. I mean, I knew people that knew him, but I didn't. Sorry.

KATARA
(satisfied with his answer)
Okay. Just curious. Good night!

AANG
(smiling)
Sleep tight!

She rolls over and goes to sleep. Aang's smile changes to a worried expression.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: Aang, sleeping on top of Appa. A LIGHTNING STRIKE and thunder crash wakes Aang with a jolt. A 360 degree pan reveals that monstrous storm clouds are quickly surrounding them.

Lightning strikes and thunder crashes again. SMASH CUT to Aang and Appa, pelted by rain and wind in the middle of the storm. Aang SCREAMS as the tempest spins them around like a leaf in a blender.

SMASH CUT again, as Aang and Appa crash into the raging ocean. They struggle to stay afloat in the towering waves, but their surging force quickly pulls them under.

UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Aang desperately hangs onto the reigns, but he loses consciousness and his grip fails. Suddenly, Aang’s eyes and tattoos BEGIN TO GLOW. A bubble of air forms around Aang and Appa. The bubble grows and glowing ice forms around it, ENCASING THEM UNDERWATER.

ANGLE ON: The ocean. We see the same underwater glow that Katara and Sokka witnessed.

ANGLE ON: Aang. Ice and swirling bubbles obscure his silhouette. His glowing eyes pierce the darkness.

KATARA (V.O.)
Aang! Aang, wake up!

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. GRANDMA’S TENT - WATER TRIBE - MORNING

Aang SHOOTS UP from his sleep.

AANG
(STARLED GASP)

A fur blanket covers Aang. His tunic, shoes, and staff are neatly arranged next to his bed.

KATARA
It’s okay, we’re in the village now. Come on, get ready! Everyone’s waiting to meet you!

As Aang pulls on his tunic, Katara stares with curiosity at the arrow tattoo on his head, which continues all the way down his back. The tattoos on his hands wrap all the way up his arms. He even has arrow tattoos on the tops of his feet. Katara grabs a half-dressed Aang by the arm and leads him out of the igloo.

EXT. WATER TRIBE VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

The tribe is made up entirely of WOMEN AND CHILDREN. NO MEN. The village is a collection of modest seal-skin tents surrounding an igloo. There is a snow wall and watchtower facing out to sea.

Aang hops out of the tent, trying to pull on his left shoe as Katara drags him. They pass by Sokka who sits alone, sharpening his boomerang. Katara finally stops and Aang looks up.

KATARA
Aang, this is the... entire village. Entire village, Aang.

AANG’S P.O.V.: EVERY PERSON in the small village is standing in a circle looking at him. Aang politely bows. A few of the mothers nervously pull their children safely behind them.

AANG
(to Kanna)
Uh...Why are they all looking at me like that?
(inspecting himself)
Did Appa sneeze on me?

An OLD WOMAN walks up to Aang. This is Katara and Sokka’s Grandmother.

GRANDMA
Well, no one has seen an Airbender in a hundred years. We thought they were extinct... until my granddaughter and grandson found <u>you</u>.

She indicates Katara and Sokka, her grandchildren.

ANGLE ON: Aang. He’s not sure what to make of this statement.

AANG
Extinct...?

KATARA
Aang, this is my Grandmother.

GRANDMA
Call me Gran-gran!

Sokka snatches the staff from Aang.

SOKKA
What is this, a weapon? You can’t stab anything with this.

AANG
(effortlessly snatching the staff back)
It’s not for stabbing, it’s for Airbending.

He quickly jolts the staff with a small blast of Airbending and glider wings snap open. Sokka flinches. The kids OOH and AHH. A LITTLE GIRL jumps up and down, excited.

LITTLE GIRL
Magic trick! Do it again!

AANG
Not magic, Airbending. It lets me control the air currents around my glider and fly.

SOKKA
You know, last time I checked, humans can’t fly.

AANG
Check again!

Aang shoots Sokka a sporting smile, then whips the glider over his head. He crouches in a low stance and a powerful gust of wind kicks up the snow around him. Sokka flinches again. Aang leaps high into the air and begins to glide in a spiral above the village. It is the most exciting thing the villagers have seen in a long time.

Aang swoops low to the ground near the small crowd. They SCREAM, thrilled. Aang arcs back into the air as everyone claps. He makes eye contact with an exuberant Katara and gives her a goofy grin. Forgetting himself, Aang and his glider smash straight into the snow watchtower. He crumples up and falls to the ground, leaving a sizable hole in the tower. Katara and the children rush over to help Aang.

SOKKA
My watchtower!

KATARA
(to Aang)
That was amazing!

Katara and the children help a dizzy Aang to his feet. He folds his glider shut, brushes snow off of himself.

SOKKA
(disgusted)
Great. You're an Airbender. Katara's a Waterbender. Together, you can just waste time all day long.

Sokka walks off. Aang turns to Katara.

AANG
You're a Waterbender!

KATARA
Well, sort of...not yet...

GRANDMA
(interrupting)
Alright, no more playing. Come on Katara, you have chores.

Grandma ushers Katara back toward the tent. Katara can hardly contain her excitement.

KATARA
(sotto)
I told you he's the real thing, Gran-gran! I've finally found a bender to teach me!

GRANDMA
Katara, try not to put all your hopes in this boy.

KATARA
But he’s special, I can tell. I sense he’s filled with much wisdom...

She glances back at Aang, who has gotten his tongue FROZEN STUCK to his staff, and is showing some little kids.

AANG
(hard lisp)
Thee? Now my tongue ith thtuck to my thtaff!

The kids pull hard on the staff, trying to get it unstuck, causing Aang to make a hilarious face.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - FIRE NAVY SHIP - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON: Uncle. He is reclined in a chair, casually watching Zuko practice.

UNCLE
Again.

CUT WIDE: Zuko squares off against two adult Firebenders. They drill an intense sparring sequence, rapidly punching and countering with Firebending. Zuko’s skill is at a very high level, despite being only 16. When the sequence ends, Uncle SIGHS and gets up from his chair.

UNCLE (cont’d)
No! Power in Firebending comes from the breath, <u>not</u> the muscles.

Uncle demonstrates a move, step by step.

UNCLE (cont’d)
The breath becomes energy in the body. The energy extends past your limbs and becomes fire.

He punches a bolt of fire.

UNCLE (cont’d)
Get it right this time.

ZUKO
Enough! I’ve been drilling this sequence all day. Teach me the next set. I’m more than ready.

UNCLE
No. You're impatient. You have yet to master your basics. Drill it again.

In a fit of rage Zuko spins around and kicks a huge bolt of flame at one of his opponents.

ZUKO
RRRAAAAHHHH!

The Firebender manages to block it, but the force of the surprise kick knocks him fifteen feet back to the edge of the deck. The other Firebender stands in awe.

ZUKO (cont'd)
(getting in Uncle's face)
The sages tell us that the Avatar is the last Airbender. He must be over a hundred years old by now. He's had a century to master the four elements. I'll need more than basic Firebending to defeat him.
(threatening)
You will teach me the advanced set!

Uncle stares Zuko down for a second, then bows.

UNCLE
(hiding his anger)
Very well.
(looking back to his chair)
But first... I must finish my roast duck.

EXT. WATER TRIBE VILLAGE - SOKKA'S FORT - LATER

ON SOKKA -- addressing someone (whom we don't see) very seriously. He stands in front of the snow wall. Dozens of defensive ice spikes protrude from its base. Sokka holds his war club.

SOKKA
Now men, it's important that you show no fear when you face a Firebender. In the Water Tribe, we fight to the last man standing! For without courage, how can we call ourselves "men"?

REVEAL that Sokka's "men" are nothing more than a disorganized bunch of BOYS sitting on the snow like a pre-school class. One LITTLE BOY is standing, legs crossed, shifting from foot to foot.

LITTLE BOY
I gotta pee.

SOKKA
(addressing all)
Listen! Until your fathers return from the war, they're counting on you to be the men of this tribe. And that means, no potty breaks!

LITTLE BOY
But, I really gotta go.

Sokka lowers his head, trying to hide his frustration.

SOKKA
(SIGHS) Okay, who else has to go?

EVERY SINGLE KID raises his hand. Sokka slaps his forehead in frustration. As the kids walk off-screen, Katara approaches.

KATARA
Have you seen Aang? Gran-gran said he disappeared over an hour ago.

SWISH PAN TO: The nearby "PORT-A-IGLOO." The kids line up in front of the small igloo-type structure as Aang exits.

AANG
(to no one in particular)
Wow! Everything freezes in there!

The kids excitedly surround him and climb on his limbs.

ANGLE ON: Katara and Sokka.

SOKKA
(FRUSTRATED GRUNT) Katara, get him out of here. This lesson is for warriors only.

LITTLE BOY (O.S.)
Wheeeeeeeeeeee!!!!

Sokka turns back to his “troops” to see that Aang is LIFTING KIDS UP ON APPA’S BACK TO LET THEM SLIDE DOWN HIS TAIL. The little kid slides off the end and over a high bar that Aang has made out of Sokka’s spear.

KATARA
(laughs)

Sokka storms over to the make-shift playground.

SOKKA
Stop! Stop it right now!

One of the little boys SCREECHES to a STOP in the middle of his tail run. Sokka takes back his spear.

SOKKA (cont’d)
What’s wrong with you? We don’t have time for fun and games with a war going on.

Aang stops what he’s doing. He’s truly baffled.

AANG
What war? What are you talking about?

Sokka just stares at Aang.

SOKKA
You’re kidding, right?

AANG
(beat, then crazed)
PENGUIN!

Aang runs off in a blur. REVEAL: Aang chases a frightened penguin over a nearby ridge.

SOKKA
(to Katara)
He’s kidding, right?

EXT. GLACIER - PENGUIN HABITAT - LATER

Hundreds of squawking penguins dot the landscape. Aang is in the middle of them all, trying to catch one. Katara watches.

AANG
(to penguin)
(LAUGHS) Hey. Come on, little guy. Wanna go sledding?
(to Katara, proudly)
I have a way with animals.

Imitating the penguins, Aang flaps his arms, waddles around, and squawks.

AANG (cont'd)
(CRAZY PENGUIN SQUAWKING)

The penguins run away. Katara LAUGHS.

KATARA
Aang, I'll help you catch a penguin if you teach me Waterbending.

AANG
You got a deal! Just one little problem -- I'm an Airbender, not a Waterbender. Isn't there someone in your tribe who can teach you?

She looks down, disappointed.

KATARA
No. You're looking at the only Waterbender in the whole South Pole.

AANG
This isn't right. A Waterbender needs to master water.
(beat, thinking)
What about the North Pole? There's another Water Tribe up there, right? Maybe they have Waterbenders who could teach you.

KATARA
Maybe. But we haven't had contact with our sister tribe in a long time. It's not exactly 'turn right at the second glacier' -- it's on the other side of the world!

AANG
But you forget, I have a flying bison.
(MORE)

AANG(cont'd)
Appa and I can personally fly you to the North Pole.
(excited)
Katara, we're gonna find you a master!

Katara is speechless, dumbfounded by the offer.

KATARA
(unsure)
That's... I mean, I don't know... I've never left home before...

AANG
Well, you think about it. But in the meantime, can you teach me to catch one of these Penguins?

KATARA
(lecturing)
Okay, listen closely, my young pupil. Catching penguins is an ancient, and sacred art. Observe.

Katara pulls some fish bait out of her pockets and throws it onto Aang. SUDDENLY, a gaggle of penguins flock to him!

We can only hear Aang's GIGGLING beneath the mass of birds.

EXT. GLACIER - CLIFFSIDE - A SHORT TIME LATER

WHOOSH!!! Katara and Aang come booking through the pass -- each riding a penguin down the mountain.

They jump over the moguls -- having a thrilling ride downhill. Katara shoots into an ice tunnel. Aang corkscrews over her, taking the lead. Katara follows right behind him.

AANG/KATARA
(GLEEFUL LAUGHS)

KATARA
I haven't done this since I was a kid!

AANG
You still <u>are</u> a kid!

They shoot out of the tunnel, suddenly revealing an ENORMOUS, IRONCLAD SHIP. Their sled ride comes to a stop in a wide open snow field near the base of the ship.

AANG (cont'd)
Whoa...

The ship looms over them, a relic of a battle long ago. It is literally frozen into the landscape. Its metal hull is torn open by the ice in many places and giant icicles hang from its smokestacks. (NOTE: This ship looks the same as Zuko's ship.) Aang stands, mouth agape. The penguins waddle off.

AANG (cont'd)
What is that?

KATARA
A Fire Navy ship. And a very bad memory for my people.

Full of curiosity, Aang approaches the ship.

KATARA (cont'd)
Aang, stop. We're not allowed to go near it. The ship could be booby-trapped.

AANG
If you want to be a bender, you have to let go of fear.

This strikes a chord with Katara. Aang climbs over some ice and into the cavernous, torn hull. Katara tentatively follows.

INT. ABANDONED FIRE NAVY SHIP - MOMENTS LATER

As Katara and Aang walk through the ship, the corridors echo ominously. Furry Polar Mice scurry about. They pass by an armory room with Fire Navy armor and weapons that make Sokka's weapons really look like toys. Aang takes this in, a disturbed look on his face.

KATARA
This ship has haunted my tribe since Gran-gran was a little girl. It was part of the Fire Nation's first attacks.

AANG
Okay. Back up. I have friends all over the world, even in the Fire Nation. I've never seen any war.

KATARA
Aang, how long were you in that iceberg?

AANG
I don’t know. A few days, maybe?

KATARA
(starting to put it together)
I think it was more like a hundred years.

AANG
(in denial)
What? That’s impossible. Do I look like a hundred-twelve year-old man to you?

He mugs cutely for Katara.

KATARA
Think about it. The war is a century old. You don’t know about it because somehow, you were in there that whole time. It’s the only explanation.

Aang’s legs go slack. He sits down, stunned.

AANG
A hundred years... I can’t believe it.

KATARA
(beat)
I’m sorry Aang.
(beat, then hopeful)
Maybe somehow there’s a bright side to all this...

AANG
I did get to meet you.

Katara smiles, touched by Aang’s sentiments and encouraged by his optimism. She helps him up.

KATARA
Come on, let’s get out of here.

INT. - ABANDONED SHIP - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Aang and Katara enter the bridge.

KATARA
Aang, lets head back. This place is creepy.

SLAM! A metal gate drops down in the door frame, trapping them and triggering an elaborate mouse-trap style contraption. Aang and Katara watch on, helpless to stop it.

AANG
What's that you said about booby-traps?

Gears in the 'mousetrap' turn, sparking and igniting a wick that burns into a cannon-like device. They hear a BANG! THROUGH THE WINDOW - a flare shoots into the sky.

AANG (cont'd)
Uh-oh.

Aang looks up and sees a hole in the roof.

AANG (cont'd)
Hold on tight.

Aang grabs hold of Katara and using Airbending, boosts them up through the hole and out of the room.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - FIRE NAVY SHIP - CONTINUOUS

Zuko scans the horizon through a large telescope contraption. He spots the FLARE ascending into the sky.

THROUGH THE LENS: He follows the smoke trail down to see the DISTANT, ABANDONED FIRE NAVY SHIP on the horizon. He sees a blurry image of a tiny figure (unrecognizable as Aang) jumping fifty feet off the ship with Katara in his arms -- he FLOATS to the ground gracefully. Zuko lowers the telescope and smiles.

ZUKO
(sotto)
The last Airbender! Quite agile, for his old age.
(to nearby Midshipman)
(MORE)

ZUKO(cont'd)
Wake my uncle! Tell him I’ve found the Avatar.

Zuko looks back into the eyepiece. THROUGH THE LENS: He scans from Aang’s tiny figure across the landscape, stopping on the smoke rising from the Water Tribe village. Zuko looks up from the telescope with grim determination.

ZUKO (cont’d)
...As well as his hiding place!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. VILLAGE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The villagers watch uneasily as the smoke from the flare dissipates in the sky. Over a snowy bank, Sokka sees Katara and Aang returning. Sokka approaches, his voice seething.

KIDS
(HAPPY SOUNDS) Aang's back.

SOKKA
(to Aang)
I knew it! You signaled the Fire Navy with that flare. You're leading them straight to us, aren't you?

KATARA
Aang didn't do anything. It was an accident!

AANG
Yeah, we were on the ship and there was this boobytrap and... well, we boobied right into it.

GRANDMA
Katara, you shouldn't have gone on that ship. Now we could all be in danger!

AANG
Don't blame Katara... I brought her there. It's my fault.

SOKKA
Ah-ha! The traitor confesses! Warriors, away from the enemy.
(pointing at Aang)
The foreigner is banished from our village.

The children sadly back away from Aang.

KATARA
Sokka, you're making a mistake!

SOKKA
No. I'm keeping my promise to Dad. I'm protecting you from threats like him.

KATARA
Aang is not our enemy.

Katara turns to the rest of the tribe, hoping to get them on her side.

KATARA (cont'd)
Don't you see? Aang's brought us something we haven't had in a long time — Fun.

SOKKA
Fun? We can't fight Firebenders with fun.

AANG
You should try it sometime.

SOKKA
Get out of our village. Now.

KATARA
Grandmother, please. Don't let Sokka do this.

GRANDMA
Katara, you knew going on that ship was forbidden. Sokka is right. I think it best if the Airbender leaves.

KATARA
Fine. Then I'm banished, too! Come on Aang, let's go.

Katara pulls Aang by the arm as they walk away.

SOKKA
Where do you think you're going?

KATARA
To find a Waterbender. Aang is taking me to the North Pole.

AANG
(happy but confused)
I am? Great!

SOKKA
Katara, would you really choose him over your tribe-- your own family?

Katara pauses and looks between Aang, and the tribe. Aang lets go of Katara.

AANG
Katara, I don't want to come between you and your family.

KATARA
So, you're leaving the South Pole? This is goodbye?

AANG
Thanks for penguin sledding with me.

KATARA
Where will you go?

AANG
Guess I'll go back home and look for the Airbenders.
(realizing)
Wow, I haven't cleaned my room in a hundred years-- Not looking forward to that.
(to the tribe)
It was nice meeting everyone.

Aang climbs onto Appa's head.

SOKKA
Let's see your bison <u>fly</u> now, air-boy.

Aang pulls the reins.

AANG
Come on Appa, you can do it. Yip-yip!

Appa just stands up. He doesn't fly.

SOKKA
Yeah, I thought so!

Aang looks back, exchanging a final look with Katara. The little girl runs up next to Katara.

LITTLE GIRL
Aang, don't go! I'll miss you!

AANG
(looking at Katara)
I'll miss you too.
(snapping the reins)
Come on, boy.

Appa walks toward the ridge, away from the tribe. The children watch, sadly.

OFF TO THE SIDE -- Katara watches Aang disappear over the horizon. She looks hurt and defeated. Grandma turns a comforting smile to Katara.

GRANDMA
Katara, you'll feel better after you--

KATARA
You happy now?! There goes my one chance at becoming a Waterbender.

Grandma watches as Katara walks away. For the first time, she appears sympathetic to her granddaughter.

Katara walks past Sokka, who has recruited the boys to help him rebuild the snow tower that Aang damaged earlier.

SOKKA
(to the kids)
All right, ready our defenses! The Fire Nation could be on our shores any moment now!

LITTLE BOY (V.O.)
But I gotta--

SOKKA
(cutting him off)
And no potty breaks!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GLACIER - CLIFFSIDE - LATER

Overlooking the abandoned ship. A couple penguins mill about. Aang stands alone with Appa. They look out to sea.

APPA
(BELLOWS)

AANG
Yeah. I liked her too.

SUDDENLY, from the waters behind the abandoned ship comes ANOTHER SHIP. Zuko's ship! Aang and Appa duck behind the ridge.

Aang pokes his head up and watches as the ship nears the Water Tribe camp!

AANG (cont'd)
The village. Appa, wait here!

Staff in hand, Aang runs off screen.

INT. FIRE NAVY SHIP - ZUKO'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Zuko stands with his arms extended as his servants strap on his menacing samurai-like armor. Zuko stares straight ahead, mentally preparing for his upcoming fight with the Avatar.

INT. GRANDMA'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

Sokka applies tribal war paint to his face. He straps on thin, leather arm and chest guards. The intense focus in his eyes is similar to Zuko's. Sokka hears a DEEP RUMBLE. The ground begins to shake. He runs out of the tent, fully armed.

EXT. WATER TRIBE VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

Sokka runs to the top of the wall, facing the ocean. Heavy mist obscures the shore. Sounds of the ice CRACKING build, adding to the low rumbling.

ANGLE ON: THE TERRIFIED FACES of the villagers as the ground starts to shake. The sound of ice cracking becomes deafening. Sokka tightens his grip on his weapons, straining to see through the mist. THEN...

The enormous ship appears out of the fog, dwarfing the village. Villagers huddle near the rear of the camp as the ship draws closer. Children SCREAM. Running mothers pick up their kids and hide behind snow hills.

The rumbling COLLAPSES the snow tower next to Sokka.

SOKKA
Oh, man... Oh man.

The igloo also collapses. Fissures open up in the icy ground. Katara quickly runs out and PICKS UP a confused little boy, saving him from the ship-induced earthquake.

Meanwhile, Sokka stands his ground -- showing no fear.

KATARA
(screaming)
Sokka! Get out of the way!!

The ship BARRELS THROUGH the fort's icicle spears. Sokka holds his ground as the hull splits the wall on which he's standing. He RIDES the wake of snow and ice -- PUSHING HIM back into the village. FINALLY, the enormous ship comes to a stop. There's a moment of quiet anticipation.

SOKKA'S POV: Looking up at the deck. Zuko suddenly peers over the edge, menacingly.

Zuko jumps off the deck and lands at the top of the newly formed snowbank. He marches downhill. Sokka raises his club, and CHARGES uphill.

SOKKA
(BATTLE CRY)

The moment Sokka reaches him, Zuko effortlessly kicks the club out of his hand and then puts a boot in his chest. He shoves Sokka, who tumbles backwards down the snowbank and lands in a heap at the bottom. Katara runs up to help him. Three Firebenders and three armed foot soldiers jump from the deck and follow Zuko downhill.

The terrified Water Tribe watches as Zuko strides past a dazed Sokka to the middle of the camp.

ZUKO
Where are you hiding him?

ON KATARA -- who is confused by the request. She shares a look with Sokka -- "Huh?" No one says a word.

Zuko spots Grandma and points at her.

ZUKO (cont'd)
He'd be about this age? Master of all elements?
(nothing)
I know you're hiding him!

In a fit of rage, Zuko swings his arm, creating a huge burst of fire near the villagers. Everyone jumps back.

Sokka grabs his club off the ground and fearlessly rushes at Zuko from behind. As Sokka tries to strike him with the club, Zuko sidesteps and arm-tosses him, knocking the club loose. Sokka tumbles into a somersault and recovers to one knee, facing Zuko.

Zuko punches fire at Sokka. In one continuous movement, Sokka rolls out of the way, pulls out his boomerang, and throws it at Zuko. Zuko ducks and the boomerang flies over his head.

The little potty-break boy tosses Sokka a spear.

LITTLE BOY
Show no fear!

Sokka quickly gets up and charges at Zuko.

SOKKA
(battle cry)

Lightning-fast, Zuko grabs hold of the spear. In rapid succession, he causes Sokka to hit himself in the head with the blunt end of the spear. Dazed, Sokka stumbles backwards and falls on his butt. A pathetic end to a valiant effort.

Zuko breaks the spear in half. Suddenly, he hears the sound of the boomerang returning and ducks at the last moment. It slices a lock from Zuko's ponytail which falls into his hand. He stares at the hair in disbelief, then glares at Sokka with rage. Zuko draws his fist back to launch fire at the helpless Sokka. Everyone GASPS. But before Zuko delivers the blow...

OUT OF NOWHERE, Aang sleds on a penguin inbetween ZUKO'S legs, holding his staff above his head. In a flash, Zuko's ankles are pulled out from under him and he flips high in the air, landing on his face. He has no idea what hit him.

Aang quickly leaps to his feet, staff ready. The penguin SQUAWKS and waddles away.

AANG
Hey Katara...hey Sokka.

SOKKA
Hi Aang. Thanks for coming.

The soldiers and Firebenders rush at him from both sides. Aang deftly swings his staff at the ground around him, blowing sharp gusts of snow straight into their eyes. The men stumble back. Zuko gets to his feet and faces Aang.

AANG
Looking for me?

ZUKO
You're the Airbender? You're the Avatar?

There's a long beat. Katara looks at Aang, confused.

KATARA
Aang?

SOKKA
(in disbelief)
No way...

Zuko and Aang begin to circle each other slowly.

ZUKO
I've spent years preparing for this encounter. Training. Meditating.
(smug smile)
You're just a child!

AANG
Well, you're just a teenager.

Zuko charges at Aang with flaming daggers. Aang evades his numerous, ferocious attacks while keeping an eye on the surrounding villagers. Zuko kicks an arc of flame. Aang ducks it, but it comes dangerously close to the villagers. Aang realizes that the fight can't go on. Aang lowers his staff.

AANG (cont'd)
If I go with you, will you promise to leave everyone alone?

Zuko nods affirmatively to Aang.

KATARA
No, Aang! Don’t do this.

His men quickly seize Aang and take away his staff. Sokka and Grandma look at Aang with new respect. Katara looks devastated.

AANG
Don’t worry, Katara. It’ll be okay.

Aang SMILES BRAVELY, as he is lead away.

EXT. FIRE NAVY SHIP/WATER TRIBE VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Standing on a metal platform, Aang (restrained by the soldiers) and Zuko are drawn up to the deck by a winch/pulley system.

AANG
(yelling to Katara)
Take care of Appa for me until I get back!

As they reach the deck, Zuko turns to his crew...

ZUKO
Head a course to the Fire Nation. I’m going home!

Aang turns and we see the terror take hold in his face.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. VILLAGE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The Village is a disaster area. The women and children try to put up their collapsed tents.

Katara stares out to sea, distraught. Behind her, Sokka frantically prepares something off-camera. She is oblivious to his actions.

KATARA
We have to go after that ship, Sokka. Aang saved our tribe, now we have to save him.

SOKKA
Katara, I--

KATARA
(interrupting)
Why can't you realize that he's on our side? If we don't help him, no one will. I know you don't like Aang, but we owe him and-

SOKKA
KATARA! Are you gonna talk all day or are you coming with me?

REVEAL: Sokka, still suited for battle, stands beside a canoe that is floating in the watery fissure, full of provisions.

KATARA
Sokka!

SOKKA
Get in. We're going to save your boyfriend.

KATARA
He's not my--

SOKKA
Whatever.

Katara smiles and hugs her brother.

GRANDMA (O.S.)
What do you two think you're doing?

Katara and Sokka stop dead in their tracks. Busted. TRUCK OUT to reveal Grandma carrying sleeping bags and other supplies.

GRANDMA (cont'd)
You'll need these. You have a long journey ahead of you.

She hands them the supplies. Katara is touched by her grandmother's change of heart.

GRANDMA (cont'd)
It's been so long since I've had hope. But you brought it back to life, my little Waterbender.

Katara hugs her Grandmother. Grandmother turns to Sokka.

GRANDMA (cont'd)
And you, my brave warrior. Be nice to your sister.

Grandma hugs Sokka. Not one for displays of affection, Sokka squirms uncomfortably.

SOKKA
Yeah. Okay, Gran.

GRANDMA
(to both)
Aang is the Avatar, he's the world's only chance. You both found him for a reason. Now your destinies are intertwined with his.

A beat. Everyone seems resolved. Katara and Sokka look down at their transportation.

KATARA
There's no way we're going to catch a war ship with a canoe.

ON CUE -- Appa walks over the ridge and BRAYS. Bingo!

KATARA (cont'd)
Appa!

SOKKA
You just love taking me out of my comfort zone, don't you?

EXT. SOUTH SEA - FIRE NAVY SHIP - CONTINUOUS

Aang, hands tied behind his back, is surrounded by Zuko's elite squad of Firebenders. Zuko holds Aang's staff.

ZUKO
This staff will make an excellent gift for my father.
(to Aang)
I suppose you wouldn't know of fathers, being raised by monks.

Aang is silent.

ZUKO (cont'd)
(to Fire Guards)
Take the Avatar to the prison hold.
(handing staff to Uncle)
And take this to my quarters.

Zuko storms away. Zuko's Uncle hands the staff to a soldier.

UNCLE
Hey, you mind taking this to his quarters for me?

As three Firebenders lead Aang away, he watches with special attention as the soldier carries his staff into the main tower.

INT. - FIRE NAVY SHIP - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Aang is surrounded by the Firebenders. Two behind, one in front.

AANG
So...I guess you've never fought an Airbender before.
(no response)
I bet I could take you both with my hands tied behind my back.

FIREBENDER #1
Silence.

Aang INHALES deeply and dramatically, holding it until his face turns red. Suddenly he EXHALES a big gust of wind at the first Firebender's back. He flies forward and smacks into the prison door.

Aang immediately leaps up and lands on the other two, one foot on each helmet. He closes his feet together, knocking their helmets together with a loud CLANG. Aang scurries back down the corridor as the first Firebender shoots fire at him. Aang leaps up through a hatch, avoiding the flames.

EXT. FIRE NAVY SHIP - DECK - CONTINUOUS

Aang pops onto the deck, hands still tied behind his back. He makes a mad dash for the door where he saw the soldier take his staff. Aang does a flying side-kick, blasting the door open with wind. A beat later, the three Firebenders emerge from below deck, chasing after him.

FIREBENDER #1
The Avatar has escaped!

An alarm HORN sounds.

EXT. SOUTH SEA - ON THE WATER

CLOSE ON KATARA AND SOKKA. Katara sits on Appa’s head, holding the reins. Sokka sits behind her in the saddle.

SOKKA
(half-heartedly)
Go. Fly. Soar.

REVEAL that Appa is swimming, not flying. Sokka’s commands aren’t doing any good. Katara leans down and pats Appa’s head, desperately.

KATARA
Please, Appa. We need your help. Aang needs your help...

SOKKA
Up. Ascend. Elevate.

KATARA
Sokka doesn’t believe you can fly, but I do, Appa. Come on, don’t you want to save Aang?

Appa BRAYS at the sound of Aang’s name.

SOKKA
What was it that kid said? Yee-ha. Hup-hup. Wa-hoo.
(MORE)

SOKKA(cont'd)
(beat)
Yip-yip?

Suddenly, Appa bucks. His huge manatee tail flaps in the water and they launch into the air. The kids hold on, surprised.

KATARA
You did it Sokka!

SOKKA
(kid-like excitement)
HE'S FLYING! HE'S FLYING! KATARA, HE'S--
(then, trying to act cool)
I mean, big deal. He's flying.

INT. FIRE NAVY SHIP - CORRIDOR

Aang rounds a corner and comes face to face with the three foot soldiers from earlier. Nobody moves for a beat, then Aang runs directly at the soldiers. Before they know what to do, Aang "corkscrews" over them, running on the walls and ceiling.

He rounds another corner and finds a Firebender blocking his path.

AANG
You haven't seen my staff around, have you?

The Firebender strikes, and Aang leaps above the flames and over his head. He cuts the ropes binding his wrists on the Firebender's helmet spike. The Firebender is pulled down in a heap as Aang continues to run down the hallway, not missing a beat.

AANG (cont'd)
Thanks, anyway!

He runs so swiftly that the wind left in his wake slams the hatch doors shut behind him.

Aang opens a door to find the room -- Empty.

Another -- Empty.

Another -- Uncle, napping peacefully, mouth wide-open in mid snore.

UNCLE
(SNORING)

AANG
(whispering)
Sorry!

He closes the door very carefully, so as not to awaken him.

INT. ZUKO'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Aang enters the biggest room yet. There is a bed and a few of Zuko's personal effects. Aang sees his staff sitting on a desk at the back wall. Found it! Aang rushes for the staff, but before he gets to it...

AANG
My staff.

ZUKO (O.S.)
Looks like I underestimated you.

Aang whips around, surprised to find Zuko standing next to the door. Zuko slams it shut with a startling bang, trapping Aang in the room with him.

Zuko attacks, and a close-quarters fight ensues. Zuko punches compact, staccato bursts of flame. Aang deflects and disperses them with Airbending, evading Zuko with quick footwork.

Desperate, Aang creates a gust of wind, causing a tapestry to fling off the wall and onto Zuko's head. With his opponent temporarily distracted, he retrieves his staff. The tapestry bursts into flames, disintegrating around a fuming Zuko, who still stands between Aang and the door. Zuko moves to attack again, but Aang uses his staff to Airbend the mattress across the room. It sideswipes into Zuko, like the world's biggest pillow fight. Zuko slams into the wall, then collapses on top of the mattress. Aang uses his staff again to Airbend the mattress up to the ceiling, sandwiching Zuko in-between. The mattress falls to the ground, followed by a dazed Zuko. He looks up to see the door open and Aang already gone.

INT. FIRE NAVY SHIP - BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Aang bursts into the bridge and sees the observation deck straight ahead: The way out.

EXT. FIRE NAVY SHIP - OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS

He runs outside and quickly snaps open his staff. He grabs hold of the glider and jumps over the railing. Aang sails into the air, a smile on his face. His plan worked. He's free.

ANGLE ON: Zuko, who runs across the observation deck. He plants his foot on the railing and launches himself into a death-defying leap towards Aang. He has the most frightening look of determination on his scarred face. High above the deck of the ship, his outstretched hand seizes Aang's ankle. Aang's smile turns to a look of surprise. Zuko's weight drags them down. The two of them CRASH onto the deck far below. Although both are battered, Aang seems the worse for wear as he picks up his staff to face off again.

On the horizon behind Aang, Zuko sees Appa flying towards the ship.

ZUKO
What is that?

Appa BRAYS. Forgetting himself, Aang turns to see Appa carrying Katara and Sokka. He exposes his back to Zuko.

AANG
(relieved)
Appa!

Zuko takes advantage of Aang's mistake and fires a cheap shot at him. Aang turns just in time to block the flames with his staff, but the force of the blast sends him flying toward the edge of the deck. Before he can recover, Zuko punches more flames at him. The strikes knock Aang's staff out of his hands and onto the deck.

With Aang at the edge of the deck, Zuko lets loose a fierce spinning kick. Aang deflects the flames, but the force of the attack knocks Aang overboard. He plummets into the icy water below.

KATARA
Aang! No!!

EXT. - SOUTH SEA - UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

In a moment reminiscent of Aang's dream, he drifts unconscious underwater.

KATARA (V.O.)
Aang! Aang!

Aang’s eyes open at the sound of Katara’s distant voice.

KATARA (V.O.) (cont’d)
Aang!!

Aang’s eyes and tattoo momentarily FLASH and he regains consciousness. He pulls his arms in close, focusing his energy. He suddenly lashes his arms out. The water powerfully surges and swirls around him. To Aang’s surprise, he is rocketing up, faster and faster.

EXT. - SOUTH SEA - CONTINUOUS

Everyone watches in disbelief as Aang rises out of the ocean atop a TOWERING WATER VORTEX. He arcs down and lands on the deck, lashing a powerful wave of water at Zuko and his men. They crash into the railing. Zuko falls overboard.

ZUKO
(falling overboard)

Circling above -- Katara and Sokka watch the sight with amazement.

KATARA
(in disbelief)
Did you see what he just did!?

SOKKA
(genuinely impressed)
Now <u>that</u> was some Waterbending.

Aang collapses to the deck as Appa comes in closer for a landing.

ON THE DECK -- Appa lands. The siblings jump onto the deck and go to Aang’s side.

KATARA
Aang, are you okay?

Hurrying, they help him up.

AANG
(weakly)
Hey Katara...hey Sokka. Thanks for coming.

SOKKA
Well, I couldn’t let you have all the glory.

AANG
(pointing off screen)
I dropped my staff.

SOKKA
Got it.

Sokka rushes to the front of the deck where Aang’s staff lies close to the edge. He grabs one end of it but suddenly Zuko reaches over the side of the deck and grabs the other end. Sokka flinches while Zuko pulls himself up. In a role reversal from earlier, Sokka bops Zuko in the head three times with the end of the staff.

Zuko loses his grip and falls.

ANGLE ON: The side of the ship. Zuko slides back down a chain to the hanging anchor. Sokka calls down to him.

SOKKA (cont’d)
That’s from the Water tribe!

ANGLE ON: Appa. Katara boosts Aang onto Appa. As Aang weakly climbs onto his head, Katara turns and sees the drenched soldiers approaching. She swings her arm, doing her best to replicate Aang’s impressive Waterbending move. The soldiers brace themselves for another powerful wave.

KATARA
Aahhhhhhh!

Unintentionally, Katara freezes all the water on the deck BEHIND her.

AT THE SAME TIME: Sokka runs toward Appa. His boots freeze and he’s stuck in his tracks.

SOKKA
Katara!

It takes a moment for Katara and the soldiers to realize what happened. Once they do, the soldiers close in. Frantically, Katara turns her back to them, shuts her eyes and swings again. We hear the CRACKLE of ice forming. Katara opens her eyes and turns around. REVEAL: The soldiers are frozen in place, up to their necks.

An outstretched arm is frozen inches from Katara's face. After a beat, she turns and climbs onto Appa.

KATARA
Hurry up, Sokka!

Sokka bangs at the ice with his club, trying to free his boots.

SOKKA
I'm just a guy with a boomerang, I didn't ask for all this flying and magic...

Sokka frees himself and runs up Appa's tail into the saddle.

SOKKA (cont'd)
(eagerly)
YIP-YIP! YIP-YIP!

Aang, surprised for a beat, snaps the reins and they fly off the ship.

AT THE EDGE OF THE SHIP -- Uncle helps pull Zuko back onto the deck. Zuko sees the Avatar getting away.

ZUKO
Shoot them down!

He and his Uncle combine their Firebending to LAUNCH A HUGE BOLT OF FLAME AT THE BISON.

ON THE BISON -- Aang hears the blast and leaps into the saddle, staff in hand. He opens the tail of the glider and winds up like a batter. As the firebolt shoots towards them, he swings and creates a gust of wind that knocks it away.

The deflected bolt STRIKES a nearby iceberg. The incredible force of the bolt causes an avalanche -- burying the front end of the ship in ice and snow. The jolt knocks Zuko and the men to the deck. The ship grinds to a halt as the bison disappears into the clouds.

Uncle stands and approaches Zuko.

UNCLE
Good news for the Fire Lord. The Fire Nation's greatest threat -- is just a little kid!

ZUKO
That “kid”, Uncle -- just did this.
(gestures at all the vast damage)
I won’t underestimate him again.

Zuko turns to the crew men chipping the soldiers out of the ice.

ZUKO (cont’d)
Dig the ship out and follow them!
(then)
As soon as you’re done with that.

EXT. SKY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The sun sets as the bison flies through the clouds. Aang, Katara, and Sokka sit in Appa’s saddle.

KATARA
(to Aang)
How did you do that? With the water! It was the most amazing thing I’ve ever seen!

AANG
I don’t know. I just sort of...did it.

KATARA
Why didn’t you tell us you were the Avatar?

AANG
(beat)
Because... I never wanted to be.

KATARA
But Aang, the world’s been waiting for the Avatar to return and finally put an end to this war.

AANG
And how am I going to do that?

KATARA
According to legend, you need to first master Water, then Earth, then Fire, right?

AANG
That’s what the monks told me.

KATARA
Well, if we go to the North Pole, you can master Waterbending.

AANG
We could learn it together!

Katara smiles.

KATARA
And Sokka, I’m sure you’ll get to knock some Firebender heads on the way.

SOKKA
I’d like that. I’d really like that.

KATARA
(happy)
Then, we’re in this together!

Aang pulls out a map.

AANG
Alright, but before I learn Waterbending, we have some serious business to attend to...
(pointing to the map)
...here, here, and here.

KATARA
(falling for it)
What’s there?

AANG
(pointing)
Here, we’ll ride the hopping Llamas, then <u>way</u> over here we’ll surf on the backs of giant koi fish. Then back over here we’ll ride the <u>hog monkeys</u>. They don’t like people riding them...
(beat)
...but that’s what makes it fun.

While Aang talks, Katara and Sokka give each other a look -- the journey with Aang is going to be anything but straightforward.

END OF SHOW